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Summary record of the 44th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 30 May 2008, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Torres Lépori (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Argentina)
later: Mr. Ali (Chairman) ..... (Malaysia)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Ms. McLurg

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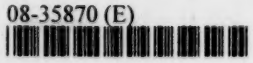

In the absence of Mr. Ali (Malaysia), Mr. Torres Lépori (Argentina), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 140: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi (A/62/669, A/62/769 and A/62/781/Add.12)

1. **Ms. Bárcena** (Under-Secretary-General for Management), introducing the performance report on the budget of the United Nations Logistics Base (UNLB) at Brindisi for the period from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007 (A/62/669), recalled that, in its resolution 60/267, the General Assembly had approved an amount of $35,478,700 for the maintenance of UNLB for 2006/07. Expenditures for that period had amounted to $32,929,200, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $2,549,500 and a budget implementation rate of 92.8 per cent.

2. Variances were attributable primarily to the delayed recruitment of international staff and reduced requirements for national staff, as well as to reduced overall operating requirements due to the cancellation of various consultancies, the non-utilization of security service resources and reduced requirements for medical services. The General Assembly was invited to decide how to treat the unencumbered balance of $2,549,500 and other income and adjustments amounting to $2,982,600, and, in connection with the strategic deployment stocks, to take note of the report.

3. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the budget for UNLB for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 (A/62/769), which represented a proposed total of $45,827,400, she said that the sum concerned amounted to an increase of $5,447,800, or 13.5 per cent, over the approved budget for the preceding period. That variance was primarily attributable to additional requirements under international and national staff and to increased operating requirements in connection with facilities and infrastructure, communications and information technology. The General Assembly was invited to appropriate the amount of $45,827,400 for the maintenance of the Logistics Base for the 12-month period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 and to prorate that amount among the individual active peacekeeping operation budgets in order to meet the financing requirements of the Base for the period in question.

4. **Ms. McLurg** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/62/781/Add.12), said that the Advisory Committee's recommendations would entail a reduction of $58,400 in the proposed budget of UNLB for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 July 2009.

5. In response to a number of proposals for the establishment of stand-alone functions at UNLB, the Advisory Committee had previously requested that a longer-term perspective on the role and future development of the Base should be presented to the General Assembly in the context of the budget proposal for 2009/10. On the basis of that recommendation, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on that issue addressing, inter alia, the basis for placing certain functions at UNLB, taking into account the support provided by the host country. The Advisory Committee underscored the importance of a longer-term perspective in clarifying the concept and functions of UNLB.

6. The Advisory Committee recommended approval of most of the Secretary-General's staffing proposals. Following a security assessment of UNLB by the Department of Safety and Security, which had indicated that there was a vital need to provide adequate safety coverage of the UNLB stocks, the Secretary-General was requesting seven new national posts for security officers and guards. The Advisory Committee noted that the host Government provided perimeter security to UNLB and rapid response to any security incident within the Base. The Secretariat should therefore approach the host Government with a view to finding the most effective way of ensuring the safety and security of UNLB premises, facilities and assets. Pending the outcome of such discussions, the Advisory Committee recommended that the requested seven additional posts should be funded as general temporary assistance.

7. The Secretary-General had proposed establishing a P-4 Medical Officer post in lieu of the current contractual arrangements for three part-time local doctors. However, there was no analysis of whether and/or how the local and regional medical facilities could carry out the tasks foreseen for the Medical Clinic. Therefore, in view of the existing medical

facilities in the vicinity of the Base, the Advisory Committee recommended against the establishment of the post.

8. The conversion of nine contractual positions into eight national General Service positions and one general temporary assistance position had also been proposed. While the Advisory Committee had no objection to the proposed conversions, it noted that in other missions and offices in Europe, services required on a continuing basis had been obtained through contracts with service providers and not through labour agencies. UNLB should explore similar options. The General Assembly might also wish to request the International Civil Service Commission to look into the matter.

9. With regard to training, the Advisory Committee drew attention to the relevant observations and recommendations contained in paragraphs 79 to 83 of its general report on peacekeeping operations (A/62/781). The forthcoming report on peacekeeping training should also provide an analysis of the optimum venues and conditions for training.

10. With regard to the organizational structure of the Base, the Advisory Committee noted that its previous observation concerning the need to clarify the reporting lines for the Tenant Units had not been addressed. It therefore requested the Secretary-General to include the relevant information in the next budget submission for the Base.

11. The Advisory Committee also noted that the evaluation of the pilot project for an off-site recruitment and outreach unit was still pending. The results of that evaluation should be included in the forthcoming report on the longer-term perspective on the role and future development of UNLB.

12. The Advisory Committee welcomed the fact that the Geographical Information System (GIS) Centre had become operational as of 31 December 2007 and that it had provided mapping and support services to a number of peacekeeping operations. Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee wished to point out that the Secretary-General had not responded substantively to its requests for an analysis of the GIS Centre and the Engineering Design Unit. That analysis should be submitted in the context of the proposed budget for UNLB for 2009/10.

13. Lastly, the Advisory Committee noted the contributions of the Government of Italy to UNLB. In that connection, it trusted that addendum II to the Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Italy, which provided for the transfer of three new buildings to the Base, would be signed expeditiously.

14. **Mr. Thomas** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, expressed concern that the report of the Advisory Committee (A/62/78/Add.12) had still not been translated into all official languages. The Group wished to reiterate its longstanding position that the Fifth Committee should be provided with documents in all official languages, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions. Nevertheless, owing to time constraints and on an exceptional basis, the Group would not object to the introduction of the report on UNLB or to the wording of relevant informal consultations. Such exceptions must not, however, become the rule.

15. **Ms. Simkić** (Slovenia), speaking on behalf of the European Union, noted that her delegation had agreed to the issuance of the Advisory Committee's report (A/62/781/Add.12) in English only in order to avoid further delaying the discussion of important peacekeeping issues. However, the current situation was exceptional and should not set a precedent.

Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support

16. **The Chairman** welcomed the newly appointed Under-Secretary-General for Field Support and invited her to make a statement.

17. **Ms. Malcorra** (Under-Secretary-General for Field Support) thanked the Fifth Committee for its unstinting work in support of United Nations peacekeeping activities. The Department of Field Support had been established in 2007 and bore primary responsibility for ensuring that peacekeeping operations and special political missions received the support necessary for the effective implementation of their mandates. It also served as an accountability mechanism designed to strengthen the management of peacekeeping activities. She was deeply committed to building a strong identity for the Department and would be working closely with other parts of the United Nations system. The only effective way to add value to the Organization's work was to engage with

all its governing bodies, including the Fifth Committee, in order to explain and justify all decisions taken.

Farewell to the Under-Secretary-General for Management

18. **The Chairman**, joined by **Mr. Thomas** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, **Ms. Simkić** (Slovenia), speaking on behalf of the European Union, **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, **Mr. Poulin** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, **Mr. Debabeche** (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the African Group, **Mr. Torres** (Chile), **Mr. Sena** (Brazil), speaking also on behalf of Argentina, **Mr. Rashkow** (United States of America), **Ms. Mesquita** (Portugal), **Mr. Afifi** (Egypt), **Mr. Rosales Díaz** (Nicaragua), **Mr. Tawana** (South Africa), **Mr. Abdelmannan** (Sudan) and **Mr. Alouan Kanafani** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), thanked Ms. Bárcena for her outstanding work as Under-Secretary-General for Management and wished her every success in her new post as Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

19. **Ms. Bárcena** (Under-Secretary-General for Management) paid tribute to the dedication and professionalism of the members of the Fifth Committee. Ultimately, only by working closely together would the Secretariat and Member States succeed in furthering the Organization's aims. She trusted that her fruitful collaboration with the Fifth Committee would continue when she took up her new post at ECLAC.

Organization of work

20. **Ms. Simkić** (Slovenia), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that her delegation could not agree to extending the second part of the resumed session in the absence of a clear programme of work. She therefore proposed suspending the meeting so that the Bureau could discuss the appropriate course of action.

The meeting was suspended at 11.40 a.m. and resumed at 12.40 p.m.

21. *Mr. Ali (Malaysia) took the Chair.*

22. **The Chairman** said that, following consultations with the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, the Bureau of the Fifth Committee recommended extending the current resumed session until the end of the following week. The Bureau would meet in due course to discuss the programme of work.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.